



The Patriarchate of Antioch & Their Eucharistic Communion with The Heretical Monophysites

Updated: Dec 26, 2023

By Subdeacon Nektarios, M.A.

On December 23, 2023, Father Matthew Vulcanescu of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland invoked Canon 15 of the First-Second Council (861 A.D.) and lawfully ceased commemoration of his local Metropolitan and Patriarch for their bareheaded teaching and preaching of heresy. This news has obviously piqued interest in some as to what is occurring in the Patriarchate of Antioch which would cause such a response of their priest. Has the Antiochian Patriarchal Synod or the Patriarch himself done something recently that caused this reaction? Unfortunately, the reasons which Father Matthew has stated in his video posted to his personal Facebook account are not recent but are long-standing.



Patriarch John X with Monophysites and Papist at the Middle East Council of Churches

These issues Father Matthew addressed go back to at least the 1980s and include statements, actions, joint declarations and synodal decisions from the Patriarchate of Antioch which has established full Eucharistic communion with the various heretical Monophysite confessions. The Monophysite confessions are made up of the Armenian, Coptic, Eritrean, Ethiopian, and Malankara 'churches' and are often labeled by Ecumenists as the so-called Oriental Orthodox Churches, which incorrectly are labeled Miaphysites rather than the correct term for what they are, which is Monophysites.

Some are probably wondering if this cessation of commemoration and communion of Father Matthew with his local bishop and the Patriarch of Antioch (John X) is a canonical action. The answer is 'yes'. Canon 15 of the First-Second Council, the council which was presided over by Saint Photios of Constantinople states,

The rules laid down with reference to Presbyters and Bishops and Metropolitans are still more applicable to Patriarchs. So that in case any Presbyter or Bishop or Metropolitan dares to secede or apostatize from the communion of his own Patriarch, and fails to mention the latter's name in accordance with custom duly fixed and ordained, in the divine Mystagogy, but, before a conciliar verdict has been pronounced and has passed judgement against him, creates a schism, the holy Council has decreed that this person shall be held alien to every priestly function if only he be convicted of having committed this transgression of law. Accordingly, these rules have been sealed and ordained as respecting those persons who under the pretext of charges against their own presidents stand aloof, and create a schism, and disrupt the union of the Church.

But as for those persons, on the other hand, who on account of some heresy condemned by holy Councils, or Fathers, withdrawing themselves from communion with their president, who, that is to say, is preaching the heresy publicly, and teaching it bare-head in Church, such persons not only are not subject to any canonical penalty on account of their having walled themselves off from any and all communion with the one called a Bishop before any conciliar or synodal verdict has been rendered, but, on the contrary, they shall be deemed worthy to enjoy the honor which befits them among Orthodox Christians. For they have defied, not Bishops, but pseudo-bishops and pseudo-teachers; and they have not sundered the union of the Church with any schism, but, on the contrary, have been sedulous to rescue the Church from schism and divisions [1].

With that being said, this priest and his ceasing commemoration of his bishop is not the primary subject of this research but is a side effect of the real issues at hand and that is bareheaded preaching and teaching of heresy of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and their synodally-approved Eucharistic communion with those heretical Monophysite confessions. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch has been a participant within the heretical ecumenist movement since it joined the World Council of Churches in 1948 [2]. What type of heretical Ecumenism has the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the Monophysite communions been involved in since 1948?

The false ecumenistic unity of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch with the Monophysite confessions who, still to the present day, reject our Chalcedonian Christology as well as reject our Ecumenical Councils (4th – 9th) has been an ongoing process since 1948. This dialogue and false unity has resulted in many meetings, joint prayer services where the Greek Orthodox have violated the sacred canons concerning praying with heretics, entering heretical and schismatic churches, signing joint theological statements, recognizing each other as sister churches, inter-marrying, allowing sponsors for mysteries to come from either church, and culminating in the 1991 Synodal document of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch which allows for Eucharistic inter-communion and concelebration of the Divine Liturgy between the Orthodox and the Monophysites.

One of the earliest official statements between the Orthodox Churches and the Monophysites was the official statement entitled, *On the Unity of the Faith: Joint Declaration of the Patriarchs of the Middle East* which was given in 1987, where both the Orthodox and the Monophysites ignored the doctrinal differences that exist between the two, and mutually recognize each other as sister churches. In this early heretical joint declaration they state that,

While reflecting once more on the deeply-rooted inner unity of faith existing between our two families of Churches, we rejoice in realizing how much we have advanced in our rediscovery and in the growing consciousness among our people of that inner unity of Faith in the incarnate Lord. Attempts by theologians of both families aimed at overcoming the misunderstandings inherited from the past centuries of alienation towards one another have happily reached the same conclusion that fundamentally and essentially we on both sides have preserved the same Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, in spite of diverse formulations and resulting controversies [3].

In this same heretical joint statement both the Orthodox and Monophysites recognize between themselves that they both preach the same gospel and the same faith, as what was taught by Christ, regardless of the doctrinal differences we share. The Monophysites reject what we believe as Orthodox Christians as defined by the Holy Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon. These pseudo-bishops write saying, “We urge our people to continue to deepen their consciousness in the deep commonality of faith and to relate to one another as brothers and sisters who share the same Gospel, the same faith and the same commission entrusted to them by their common Lord” [4]. This heretical document was signed by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria, as well as the Monophysite Armenians, Copts, and Syrian-Jacobites of Antioch. This however, was not the only agreement that exists.



Archbishop Elpidophoros, Fr Thomas Zayn (Antioch),
Fr Alexander Rentel (OCA) praying with Monophysites.

In 1989 the Orthodox and Monophysites met with the intent to come to a common agreement, or rather come to a compromise, concerning Christology and despite the decree of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, again recognize the Monophysites not as heretics but as a sister church. The document entitled the *First Agreed Statement (1989)* states that, “We have inherited from our fathers in Christ the one apostolic faith and tradition, though as Churches we have been separated from each other for centuries. As two families of Orthodox Churches long out of

communion with each other we now pray and trust in God to restore that communion on the basis of the common apostolic faith of the undivided church of the first centuries which we confess in our common creed” [5]. In addition to what was said at the beginning of the *First Agreed Statement (1989)* the authors of this document also state that, “Our mutual agreement is not limited to Christology, but encompasses the whole faith of the one undivided church of the early centuries. We are agreed also in our understanding of the Person and Work of God the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds from the Father alone, and is always adored with the Father and the Son,” but not addressing the Monophysite rejection of the Holy Ecumenical Councils of the Orthodox Church [6].

In 1990, these same actors formed another heretical joint declaration entitled the *Second Agreed Statement (1990)*, where they again recognize each other as sister churches despite doctrinal differences, to include the Monophysites' continued rejection of all the remaining Ecumenical Councils. The *Second Agreed Statement* states that the "following affirmations of our common faith and understanding, and recommendations on steps to be taken for the communion of our two families of Churches in Jesus Christ our Lord, Who prayed 'that they all may be one'" [7]. Some of the other problematic statements that occur within this document concern the councils of the Orthodox Church. These most troubling statements can be found in points six, seven and eight which state,

- The Orthodox agree that the Oriental Orthodox will continue to maintain their traditional Cyrillian terminology of "*one nature of the incarnate Logos*" ("mia fusij tou qeou Logou sesarkwmenh"), since they acknowledge the double consubstantiality of the Logos which Eutyches denied. The Orthodox also use this terminology. The Oriental Orthodox agree that the Orthodox are justified in their use of the two-natures formula, since they acknowledge that the distinction is "in thought alone" (th qewria monh). Cyril interpreted correctly this use in his letter to John of Antioch and his letters to Acacius of Melitene (PG 77, 184-201), to Eulogius (PG 77, 224-228) and to Succensus (PG 77, 228-245).

- Both families accept the first three Ecumenical Councils, which form our common heritage. In relation to the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, the Orthodox state that for them the above points 1-7 are the teachings also of the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, while the Oriental Orthodox consider this statement of the Orthodox as their interpretation. With this understanding, the Oriental Orthodox respond to it positively

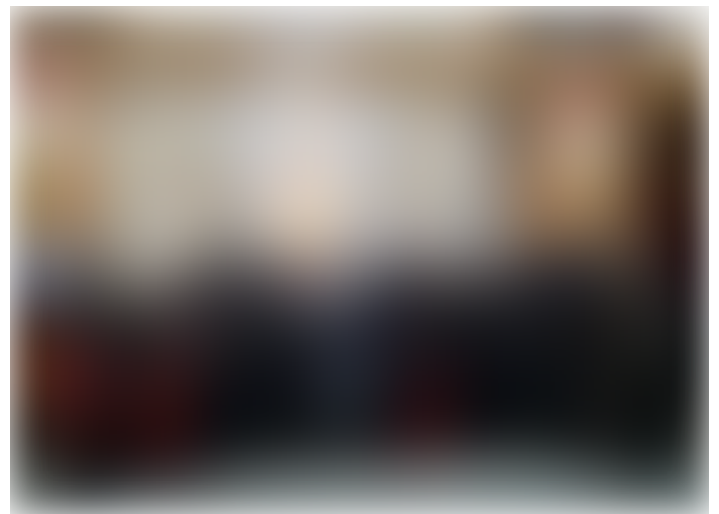
- The Orthodox should lift all anathemas and condemnations against all Oriental Orthodox Councils and Fathers whom they have anathematised or condemned in the past. [8].

As we can see from the above statements, these are compromises and not the Monophysite heretics rejecting their errors and adopting Orthodox Christianity as it was defined by our Holy Ecumenical Councils. Concerning the last point which mentions that the Orthodox Church should lift the Anathemas of their 'Fathers' whom we have condemned, we have to ask who are they exactly referring to? Some of the so-called 'Fathers' that they are referring to are Monophysite pseudo-saints which include the heretics Dioscorus and Severus of Antioch. What is problematic concerning these "agreed statements" is that they are essentially placing their own judgment above that of the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils and declaring the latter's decisions fallible as today's ecumenists do.

In 451 A.D. the Holy Ecumenical Synod clearly condemned the heretic Dioscorus saying, “The holy and great and ecumenical Synod, which by the grace of God according to the constitution of our most pious and beloved of God emperors assembled together at Chalcedon the city of Bithynia, in the martyrdom of the most holy and victorious Martyr Euphemia to Dioscorus. We do you to wit that on the thirteenth day of the month of October you were deposed from the episcopate and made a stranger to all ecclesiastical order (θεσμοῦ) by the holy and ecumenical synod, on account of your disregard of the divine canons, and of your disobedience to this holy and ecumenical synod and on account of the other crimes of which you have been found guilty, for even when called to answer your accusers three times by this holy and great synod according to the divine canons you did not come” [9].

What is also worth mentioning is the fact that this Ecumenical Council condemning the heretic Dioscorus was not the only Ecumenical Council to do so. In a letter penned by the Fathers of the Holy Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787 A.D., they wrote concerning this heresy *The Letter of the Synod to the Emperor and Empress*, which included a condemnation of other heretics stating, “And now having carefully traced the traditions of the Apostles and Fathers, we are bold to speak. Having but one mind by the inbreathing of the most Holy Spirit, and being all

knit together in one, and understanding the harmonious tradition of the Catholic Church, we are in perfect harmony with the symphonies set forth by the six, holy and ecumenical councils; and accordingly we have anathematised the madness of Arius, the frenzy of Macedonius, the senseless understanding of Appolinarius, the man-worship of Nestorius, the irreverent mingling of the natures devised by Eutyches and *Dioscorus*, and the many-headed hydra which is their companion” [10].



Antiochian Metropolitan Joseph at Joint Prayer with Monophysites

Another heretical agreement between the Orthodox and Monophysites is a document entitled, *Recommendations on Pastoral Issues (1990)*, which was created by the “Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, at its meeting at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in Chambesy, Geneva from September 23rd to 28th 1990, [and] received a report from its Joint Pastoral Sub-committee which had met at the Anba Bishoy Monastery in Egypt from 31st January to 4th February 1990” [11]. This document in point six of its agreement, in essence, endorses the heretical branch theory which accepts the mysteries of heretics, communes with them, and promulgates the new heresy of ecumenism. The document states that, “Churches of both families should agree that they will not rebaptize members of each other, for recognition of the baptism of the Churches of our two families, if they have not already done so,” [12] which violates Apostolic Canon XLVI, Canon I of the Council of Carthage 258 A.D., and Canon II of the Fifth-Sixth Council which sealed the Canon and Council of Carthage under Saint Cyprian as being ecumenical in statutes and divinely inspired [13]. In addition to this embrace of the heretical branch theory in this document, there are also other points of acceptance concerning their participation in the heretical ecumenical movement and within the World Council of Churches which is the primary international organization that promotes one world religion.

A year later the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the Monophysite confession signed their most significant and most heretical statement in November of 1991 entitled, *Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on the Theological Dialogue: On the Relations between the Eastern and Syrian Orthodox Churches*, which is the culmination of all of these preceding joint statements that had been made in the years prior. This document, being different than the last one in that it established Eucharistic unity between the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the Monophysite Confession, was synodally approved by entire Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, signed by Patriarch Ignatios IV and outlined what this Eucharistic communion is to look like and how it is going to be applied between the two confessions. This synodally approved letter states in its entirety:

A Synodal and Patriarchal Letter

To All Our Children, Protected by God, of the Holy See of Antioch

Beloved:

You must have heard of the continuous efforts for decades by our Church with the sister Syrian Orthodox Church to foster a better knowledge and understanding of both Churches, whether on the dogmatic or pastoral level. These attempts are nothing but a natural expression that the Orthodox Churches, and especially those within the Holy See of Antioch, are called to articulate the will of the Lord that all may be one, just as the Son is One with the Heavenly Father (John 10:30).

It is our duty and that of our brothers in the Syrian Orthodox Church to witness to Christ in our Eastern region where He was born, preached, suffered, was buried and rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and sent down His Holy and Life-Giving Spirit upon His holy Apostles.

All the meetings, the fellowship, the oral and written declarations meant that we belong to One Faith even though history had manifested our division more than the aspects of our unity.

All this has called upon our Holy Synod of Antioch to bear witness to the progress of our Church in the See of Antioch towards unity that preserves for each Church its authentic Oriental heritage whereby the one Antiochian Church benefits from its sister Church and is enriched in its traditions, literature and holy rituals.

Every endeavour and pursuit in the direction of the coming together of the two Churches is based on the conviction that this orientation is from the Holy Spirit, and it will give the Eastern Orthodox image more light and radiance, that it has lacked for centuries before.

Having recognised the efforts done in the direction of unity between the two Churches, and being convinced that this direction was inspired by the Holy Spirit and projects a radiant image of Eastern Christianity overshadowed during centuries, the Holy Synod of the Church of Antioch saw the need to give a concrete expression of the close fellowship between the two Churches, the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Eastern Orthodox for the edification of their faithful.

Thus, the following decisions were taken:

1. We affirm the total and mutual respect of the spirituality, heritage and Holy Fathers of both Churches. The integrity of both the Byzantine and Syriac liturgies is to be preserved.

2. The heritage of the Fathers in both Churches and their traditions as a whole should be integrated into Christian education curricula and theological studies. Exchanges of professors and students are to be enhanced.
3. Both Churches shall refrain from accepting any faithful from one Church into the membership of the other, irrespective of all motivations or reasons.
4. Meetings between the two Churches, at the level of their Synods, according to the will of the two Churches, will be held whenever the need arises.
5. Every Church will remain the reference and authority for its faithful, pertaining to matters of personal status (marriage, divorce, adoption etc.).
6. If bishops of the two Churches participate at a holy baptism or funeral service, the one belonging to the Church of the baptized or deceased will preside. In case of a holy matrimony service, the bishop of the bridegroom's Church will preside.
7. The above-mentioned is not applicable to the concelebration in the Divine Liturgy.
8. What applies to bishops equally applies to the priests of both Churches.
9. In localities where there is only one priest, from either Church, he will celebrate services for the faithful of both Churches, *including the Divine Liturgy*, pastoral duties, and holy matrimony. He will keep an independent record for each Church and transmit that of the sister Church to its authorities.
10. If two priests of the two Churches happen to be in a locality where there is only one Church, they take turns in making use of its facilities.
11. If a bishop from one Church and a priest from the sister Church happen to concelebrate a service, the first will preside even when it is the priest's parish.
12. Ordinations into the holy orders are performed by the authorities of each Church for its own members. It would be advisable to invite the faithful of the sister Church to attend.

13. Godfathers, godmothers (in baptism) and witnesses in holy matrimony can be chosen from the members of the sister Church.

14. Both Churches will exchange visits and will co-operate in the various areas of social, cultural and educational work.

We ask God's help to continue strengthening our relations with the sister Church, and with other Churches, so that we all become one community under one Shepherd.

Damascus

12 November 1991

Patriarch Ignatios IV

Of the Greek Antiochian Church

Patriarch Ignatius Zakka Iwas

of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch [14].

As we can see, this document in fourteen points, describes exactly how this Eucharistic communion is going to be actualized between these two ecclesiastical bodies. This document describes the various levels that each confession will share the mysteries of the Church, delineates who will preside at various different liturgical services, promulgates ecumenism and the heretical branch theory and most egregiously, in the 9th point, states that they will allow Eucharistic communion between the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the Monophysites. Many of those Orthodox who push a conservative modernism and advocate remaining in communion with preachers and teachers of heresy before an ecumenical council, attempt to assert that this is not actually the Patriarchate of Antioch synodally approving Eucharistic communion. However, we can see from the Synodal document's own text, that this most certainly is the case.

Since most of those conservative modernists will still try to dismiss this undeniable evidence that Eucharistic communion was, in fact, approved by the Synod of Antioch and that communion between the two different ecclesiastical bodies is a reality which has been in practice since 1991 and is still in practice, and never has been rescinded, we can look to a little-known document entitled *Unity in Antioch* published in 2002 by Subdeacon Charles Baz. According to this document, which was a master's thesis that was completed at Saint Vladimir's Seminary on May 1, 2001, there is in fact "limited, economic intercommunion" between the two.

The author of the document, who is a self-professed ecumenist, begins his thesis paper with a very important acknowledgement in which he writes,

I wish to thank my Chief Father-in-Christ, His Beatitude IGNATIUS IV Hazim, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, for granting me to hold an interview with him specifically for this thesis. His wealth of information gave me a lot of insights on the topic of "Unity in Antioch." May God grant him many years. I also wish to thank my mentor, Professor John H. Erickson, for his kindness, patience, and instruction. Both men are not only master theologians, but they are also sincere Orthodox Christians. Both have instructed me on what it means to be an ecumenist. It is through their assistance that this thesis has come to fruition [15].

What is significant about this thesis paper is that it is one of the only documents that exist in which the author has personally interviewed Patriarch Ignatius IV of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, who was the primate that signed this document and who is delivering what can only be understood to be the most official interpretation of this joint agreement. According to the then Subdeacon, now priest, Father Charles, one of his reasons that he chose this subject was because of the "current status quo in the Church of Antioch, where the two patriarchs of that ancient see have signed a document of 'mutual and complete respect' for both traditions, a document which allowed (by *eikonomia*) for a 'limited and economic intercommunion' between the two Churches" [16].

In the introduction of the thesis paper we can see that this self-proclaimed ecumenist was expressing the opinion that there are various levels of intercommunion and that this document was not "full Eucharistic communion" but serves as another type of Eucharistic communion which is based on a heretical and false ecclesiology of "limited, economic intercommunion" possibly like what was proclaimed by the Soviet Moscow Patriarchate in 1969 concerning their Eucharistic communion with the Latin papist, which also has yet to be rescinded [17]. In this thesis, Father Charles states that his conclusion is that he,

Will recommend that the most desirable and feasible solution to the currently existing double-hierarchical system of the two Churches ought to be a state of “limited, economic intercommunion,” like the one currently practiced in the Church of Antioch. After fifteen centuries of separation, one must admit, union cannot be achieved overnight. A limited, economic (i.e. from οἰκονομία) intercommunion status quo can thus preserve in each Church her rich spirituality and unique tradition [18].

Further on in the thesis paper by Father Charles Baz, he explains that in point seven and eight of the ‘*Agreed Statement*’ there is only some type of limited communion between the Orthodox and the Monophysites based on some type of innovative economy (*economia*). However, as you can imagine this innovative and heretical ecclesiology is in direct violation of Apostolic Canon XLV which states, “Let a bishop, presbyter, or deacon, who has only prayed with heretics, be excommunicated: but if he has permitted them to perform any clerical office, let him be deposed” [19] and in Canon XLVI saying, “We ordain that a bishop, or presbyter, who has admitted the baptism or sacrifice (Eucharist) of heretics, be deposed. For what concord hath Christ with Belial, or what part hath a believer with an infidel?” [20]. Father Charles states that,

According to the “Agreed Document,” which was signed by the two patriarchs of Antioch, the current status quo in the Churches of Antioch can be defined as a “limited, economic intercommunion.” It is “limited” because Resolutions 7 and 8 forbid the clergy of the two Churches to concelebrate during the Divine Liturgy, since the celebration of the Eucharist is the visible sign of the One Catholic Church which is confessed in the Creed. It is “economic” because it is sanctioned by [*economia*]. It is “intercommunion” because it is not a full communion per se. Full communion will take place, by the will of God, when there exists only a single hierarchy. This “limited, economic intercommunion” status quo is not exclusive to Antioch and can be attained by others. Churches in other “regions” can follow the example set forth in Antioch if they earnestly desire a future union of the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches [21].

As can be read here, Father Charles, admits that there is some type of limited communion but that there is not a “full communion.” Meaning, that they (the Monophysites) can in some way, on a limited basis receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the divine Mystagogy, again despite what the Fathers, Ecumenical Councils, and Holy Canons say concerning the matter. However, despite this “limited intercommunion” ecclesiology, Father Charles goes on to state that, “The Patriarchal Encyclical, nonetheless, presupposes a duality in the hierarchical system, and calls for, in addition to pastoral collaboration, an economic and limited intercommunion, not full communion” [22]. So not only does this heretical document, which was synodally approved by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch show that they recognize a “duality in the hierarchal system,” which would seem to be a parallel hierarchy, in the same jurisdiction as the Chalcedonian Orthodox Patriarchate, who does not confess the Chalcedonian Orthodox Faith but that we are allowed to communion them. There are many in the conservative modernist movement who will try to argue this innovative ecclesiological point of a “limited intercommunion” but will also say that if you have Christ in the Eucharist, what are you lacking?



Antiochian Metropolitan Joseph Praying with
Monophysite in Their Altar

It is clear that the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, is in fact, in Eucharistic communion with those Monophysite heretics who reject our Christology as it was defined by the Ecumenical Councils, and also reject our Ecumenical Councils themselves; but what does this mean for those who are in the parishes? No doubt, the same conservative modernists will argue that just because this intercommunion happens over in the old countries, does not mean that it occurs here in the diaspora, or the even stranger argument that just because the Antiochian Synod approved and signed this document, does not mean that the whole patriarchate is in

communion with the Monophysites, which of course is an absolutely dishonest and illogical statement.

How is all of this playing out on the ground in the diaspora parishes of the Antiochian Patriarchate in North America? To answer this question we can turn and listen to the testimony of a Monophysite cleric in the United States who, in a podcast entitled *Are Eastern & Oriental Orthodox Already in Communion?* on the Orthodox Christian Theology YouTube Channel, goes into his personal experience with these joint statements and describes how they are being lived out in North America. In this podcast, the Monophysite clergyman Subdeacon Daniel Kakish of the Syriac Orthodox ‘church’ when questioned about what this exactly means, goes into a detailed explanation how he spoke to the Patriarch of Antioch himself concerning this topic and inquired if he could attend and commune at parishes of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, which the Patriarch stated that it was acceptable. Subdeacon Daniel also details how a former priest of his who belonged to the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch would often visit and commune at the Syriac Orthodox parish in California [23]. Subdeacon Daniel, being asked specifically how these joint statements are being applied within the context of North America states that these agreements are “being interpreted how they are applied, that’s like if we want to know any official interpretation we see how its being practice by the people who made the agreement in the first place” [24]. He goes on to state that this agreement in practice is “happening whether we like it or not” and that in his personal experience, “I have spoken to clergy about this, I’ve spoken to [the] hierarchy about this they have all confirmed it to me here in the United States that this is an applicable agreement that is taking place” [25].

In addition to this podcast and their at length discussion of these heretical joint statements, it has been personally reported to me, contemporaneous with the writing of this article that an Antiochian Orthodox parish within the Toronto metropolitan area has been openly communing Ethiopian Monophysites to the scandal of some of the parishioners. It has also been reported to me that one of the Antiochian Orthodox parishes in the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan area has in the past also openly communed Monophysites. These joint heretical statements which have been synodally approved by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the testimony of both Orthodox Christians and Monophysites here in North America demonstrate that these agreements are being lived out in practice and that the Patriarch of Antioch and the Monophysite confession are, in fact, in communion with each other not only in practice both in the old countries and in the diaspora, but also officially in writing.

The primary problem with all of these joint statements, resolutions, and declarations are that they bring into question the authority of the Ecumenical Councils, the Church Fathers, and their divinely inspired actions and official decrees which defined our Holy Orthodox faith. Do these modernist academic theologians know more than the saintly fathers of these Ecumenical Councils who they seem to question at every turn? Concerning the subject of the Orthodox and Monophysite relationships in our modern time, let us adhere to the timeless and divinely inspired decision of the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon which says to the Orthodox faithful, “These things, therefore, having been expressed by us with the greatest accuracy and attention, the holy Ecumenical Synod defines that no one shall be suffered to bring forward a different faith (ἐτέραν πίστιν), nor to write, nor to put together, nor to excogitate, nor to teach it to others. But such as dare either to put together another faith, or to bring forward or to teach or to deliver a different Creed (ἕτερον σύμβολον) to as wish to be converted to the knowledge of the truth, from the Gentiles, or Jews or any heresy whatever, if they be Bishops or clerics let them be deposed, the Bishops from the Episcopate, and the clerics from the clergy; but if they be monks or laics: let them be anathematized.[...] This is the faith of the fathers: let the metropolitans forthwith subscribe it: let them forthwith, in the presence of the judges, subscribe it: let that which has been well defined have no delay: this is the faith of the Apostles: by this we all stand: thus we all believe” [26].

Are Eastern & Oriental Orthodox Already In Communion?



References

- [1]. Patriarch St Photios of Constantinople, “Concerning the So-Called First-an-Second Council: Canon XV,” *The Rudder*, trans. John Nicolaides (Chicago: The Orthodox Christian Education Society, 1958), 470-471.
- [2]. “Member Churches: Orthodox Churches (Eastern),” World Council of Churches, accessed December 23, 2023, https://www.oikoumene.org/member-churches?search_api_fulltext=&location_filter_2=All&field_wcc_n_church_family_single=2028&glossaryaz_title=
- [3]. “On the Unity of the Faith Joint Declaration of the Patriarchs of the Middle East,” Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), accessed December 23, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110527154649/http://www.orthodoxunity.org/state07.php>
- [4]. Ibid.
- [5]. “First Agreed Statement (1989),” Orthodox Unity, accessed December 24, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110527154921/http://www.orthodoxunity.org/state01.php>
- [6]. Ibid.
- [7]. “Second Agreed Statement (1990),” Orthodox Unity, accessed December 24, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110527154858/http://www.orthodoxunity.org/state02.php>
- [8]. Ibid.
- [9]. Fourth Ecumenical Council, “The Condemnation Sent by the Holy and Ecumenical Synod to Dioscorus,” in *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 14*, ed. Philip Schaff & Henry Wace (Peabody: Hendrickson Publications, 1999), 260.
- [10]. Seventh Ecumenical Council, “The Letter of the Synod to the Emperor and Empress,” in *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 14*, ed. Philip Schaff & Henry Wace (Peabody: Hendrickson Publications, 1999), 571.

- [11]. “Recommendations on Pastoral Issues (1990),” Orthodox Unity, accessed December 25, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110527154749/http://www.orthodoxunity.org/state03.php>
- [12]. Ibid.
- [13]. Father Peter Heers, *On The Reception of the Heterodox Into the Orthodox Church: The Patristic Consensus and Criteria* (Florence: Uncut Mountain Press, 2023), 83.
- [14]. “Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on the Theological Dialogue: On the Relations between the Eastern and Syrian Orthodox Churches,” Syriac Orthodox Resources, accessed December 25, 2023, <https://syriacorthodoxresources.org/Ecumenism/19911112socrumorthstmt.html>
- [15]. Subdeacon Charles Baz, “Unity in Antioch Between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches” (M.Div. Thesis., Saint Vladimir Seminary, 2001), accessed December 25, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190629083051/https://orthodoxjointcommission.wordpress.com/2013/12/23/unity-in-antioch/>
- [16]. Ibid.
- [17]. “Russian Priests May Minister to Roman Catholics,” The New York Times, accessed December 25, 2023, <https://www.theorthodoxarchive.org/post/the-moscow-patriarchate-1969-synodal-decision-for-sacramental-union-with-the-roman-catholics>
- [18]. Subdeacon Charles Baz, “Unity in Antioch Between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches” (M.Div. Thesis., Saint Vladimir Seminary, 2001), accessed December 25, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190629083051/https://orthodoxjointcommission.wordpress.com/2013/12/23/unity-in-antioch/>
- [19]. Canons of the Holy and Altogether August Apostles, “Canon XLV,” in *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 14*, ed. Philip Schaff & Henry Wace (Peabody: Hendrickson Publications, 1999), 597.
- [20]. Ibid., 597.

[21]. Subdeacon Charles Baz, “Unity in Antioch Between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches” (M.Div. Thesis., Saint Vladimir Seminary, 2001), accessed December 25, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190629083051/https://orthodoxjointcommission.wordpress.com/2013/12/23/unity-in-antioch/>

[22]. Ibid.

[23]. “Are Eastern & Oriental Orthodox Already in Communion,” Orthodox Christian Theology — YouTube Channel, accessed December 23, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/live/fq38ulO8lEA?si=la5SPQ_2oqtrbzhG&t=832

[24]. Ibid., https://www.youtube.com/live/fq38ulO8lEA?si=7gQIA8U7_f655mw6&t=2705

[25]. Ibid., <https://www.youtube.com/live/fq38ulO8lEA?si=eRb3uZ0Raqe4pYPu&t=2754>

[26]. Fourth Ecumenical Council, “The Definition of Faith of the Council of Chalcedon,” in *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 14*, ed. Philip Schaff & Henry Wace (Peabody: Hendrickson Publications, 1999), 265.